

AN
ADDRESS

(11)

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

OF THE

COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS,

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE, NEW-YORK,

AT THE

SPRING COMMENCEMENT, MARCH 10, 1864.

BY

J. MAURAN, A.M., M.D., ETC.

PROVIDENCE, R. I.

(ALUMNUS OF 1819.)

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1864.



CORRESPONDENCE.

NEW-YORK, *June 27th*, 1863.

JOSEPH MAURAN, M.D., *Providence, R. I.*

DEAR SIR: I have the honor of informing you, that at the last Annual Meeting of the Alumni Association of the "College of Physicians and Surgeons," held March 13th, 1863, you were elected Orator for the next (6th) Annual Meeting of the Association.

Respectfully yours, &c.

JOHN H. HINTON, M.D., *Sec'y.*

PROVIDENCE, R. I., *June 30*. 1863.

DEAR SIR: Your favor of 27th inst. came duly to hand, announcing my appointment as Anniversary Orator, &c., which post I feel constrained, though reluctantly, to accept.—Would that the high honor had fallen upon an abler head.

As I have never enjoyed the privilege of meeting the Alumni, at either of the preceding re-unions, you will confer an exceeding favor by enclosing to my address, per express, whatever may have been "said or sung" on those occasions, which may indicate, though negatively, my selection of a theme.

With many thanks for your personal kindness, believe me very truly,

Yours, &c. &c.,

J. MAURAN,

33 *South Main St.*

TO JOHN H. HINTON, M.D.,
New-York.

The Fifty-Seventh Annual Commencement
OF THE
COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS.

ORDER OF EXERCISES.

MUSIC.

PRAYER..... BY REV. SULLIVAN H. WESTON, D.D.

CONFERRING OF DEGREES,

AND

CHARGE TO GRADUATES,..... BY EDWARD DELAFIELD, M.D.,
PRESIDENT.

MUSIC.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PRIZES, BY PROF. JOSEPH M. SMITH, M.D.

BY PROF. ALONZO CLARK, M.D.

BY HENRY B. SANDS, M.D.,

DEMONSTRATOR OF ANATOMY.

MUSIC.

VALEDICTORY ADDRESS... BY JAMES W. McLANE, A.B., M.D.,

MEMBER OF THE GRADUATING CLASS.

MUSIC.

ADDRESS TO THE ALUMNI.....BY JOSEPH MAURAN, A.M., M.D.

(ALUMNUS OF 1819.)

BENEDICTION.

MUSIC.

ADDRESS.

ALUMNI :—In accepting the honorable position of your anniversary orator, I feel that I have attempted a compliance with your kind wishes, rather than consulted my own ability to fulfill, satisfactorily, the corresponding expectations of the appointment; especially so, in consideration of the proverbial talent and high consideration of those who have heretofore performed this interesting service.

Permit me, therefore, to crave that special indulgence, which professional brethren are ever wont to extend most cheerfully to an unfortunate brother *in extremis*.

Being wholly unaccustomed to address large audiences, (having passed the even tenor of professional life in one of our provincial cities,) dependent more upon my humble capacities as a maker of *prescriptions* rather than of *speeches*, I rise with unaffected diffidence and becoming modesty; in presuming, at this late hour, after the many brilliant efforts, with which we have been already pampered, to address the highly accomplished *indoctrinati* of our "honored Mother."

Again, never having participated in the high privilege of meeting my brethren on these auspicious occasions, now the sixth in course, though my heart has ever been with them, and being thus unacquainted with their expectations, I experienced a not unnatural repugnance to accept of their highly flattering appointment; but, having *assented* thereto, the afflicting ques-

tion arose, what shall I say? Aye, there "was the rub"! I ever revered the well known adage of Apelles, "*Ne Sutor ultra crepidam*", freely interpreted, the "cobbler should stick to his last." Therefore, in accordance with its injunction, my original determination was to ramble through cursorily, personal reminiscences of olden times touching our honored "Alma Mater"; but alas! I learned that *that* field had been explored, pre-occupied, and graphically illustrated by a series of inimitable portraitures of the leading spirits of *that* age, by my worthy predecessor, Doctor Blatchford! Here *again* was a dilemma! Consequently, having been, (some eleven years since,) humbly instrumental in suggesting and inaugurating, through the Legislature, an act securing for my *native* state, a perfect system of "general registration" or "vital statistics," and fully appreciating thereafter, experimentally, through its adoption and successful *continuance*, the *want* and neglect of the same through a great majority of other States, I *prepared* an elaborate address upon that important subject; commending to my professional brethren, through a series of argumentation, based upon established facts both at home and abroad, the imperative, immediate necessity of securing such a system throughout *all* our States, as an essential, genealogical and sanitary measure;—fully realising that it was the most interesting question, *socially* and nationally of this present age; our own records having been so constantly brought into requisition through the bereaved families of the decedent soldier; and further, that general registration, to our disgrace, be it confessed, had received, as yet, except in a few sections of the country, from its acknowledged sentinels, our profession, but a limited share of attention compared with its commensurate importance. I had also, therein urged my younger brethren, recently initiated, to constitute themselves self-appointed missionaries throughout their respective districts, for inaugurating judicious acts of "registration", which shall secure to *their* States the important contingencies therein involved. In truth, had such "acts" as we

are now suggesting, been established in the early infancy of our colonial settlement, or even thereafter, by all the independent States originally constituting our consolidated "Union," millions! aye! untold millions! now held by the British Crown under default of satisfactory *evidence of consanguinity*, which is conclusively established by the perfect system of registration now alluded to, would have, years and years since, been rightfully restored to legitimate inheritants in this country! A contingency painfully recognized, I doubt not, in many families in this community, and, in truth, throughout our land. Hence we perceive the imperative necessity of adopting such a system at the earliest possible period, throughout the *whole* of our extended territory, and more especially so, in consideration of the interminable influx from the older countries of promiscuous emigration.

Such, my friends, is the summary of my original intentions, more truthfully, probably, inflictions. But,—visiting your city some three weeks since, and enquiring particularly into the specific history of the previous anniversaries and expectations of the authorities in the premises, the manner how, time when, place where, and also the usual constitution of the auditory, (having originally presumed it to have been strictly professional,) I was fully impressed that my address already carefully prepared upon the preceding subject, though highly proper for an audience, purely professional, was wholly undapted to *that* usually convened on these occasions.

Upon my return home, therefore, I threw together in a hasty and unmethodical manner, a few reminiscences, which you will permit me to superadd, historically, to those heretofore presented to your honorable association; embracing strictly *personal* incidents and reflections illustrative of those long-gone-by-times of our beloved institution; passing in cursory review, some of the salient points of character of a few of her original founders and instructors; pioneers and distinctive land marks of her pristine influence and glory.

In boyhood, so in college life, an instinctive sympathy,—affectionate attachment, and regard are naturally developed between the pupil and earlier teacher, never to be effaced!—And, when we contemplate in retrospect, the lengthened vista of truly, rapidly flitting years since first introduced to the bosom of our time-honored Mater, now approaching, we regret to confess, as the ladies are present, nearly the fifth decade! (though we trust to many of us, truly, a life of “linked sweetness, long drawn out,”) with what varied imaginings are we encompassed, and, from their vivid reproduction in contemplation of the *fons et origo* of our happy career, do we impulsively exclaim, our Fathers!—where are they? gone! gone! with the years before the flood! and now to us, their humble followers, nothing remains but the priceless memorial of their virtues and exalted worth, treasured up, incorruptibly, in the inmost recesses of grateful hearts;—“*memoria in æterna.*”

With what an array of worthies was our “loving mother” blessed at the early dawn of her development and pristine vigor! Without any disparagement to the learned and truly worthy “Faculty” who now hold the reins of the professional curriculum, many of them personal friends, we can with truthfulness exclaim,—and we doubt not the sentiment develops a hearty response from every Alumnus now before us, *Professores illustrissimi!* your like as men and teachers may ne’er be seen again!

Recall to mind with me (especially my cotemporaries) a few of the men of those days; “Bard,” the then president, extended to your speaker the right hand of fellowship; a truly excellent man, who had done much for the college in its earliest infancy, and was also author of a highly practical treatise on obstetrics, a department in which, during my active professional career (having years since retired from *general* practice,) I had been peculiarly interested,—and permit me to add, that whatever of success I may have attained

in that specialty I accredit largely to the practical hints derived from that unpretending though inestimable work.

Again, let us revive in memory, the bland, mild, yet forcible and captivating manner of the venerable "Post;" venerable! did I say? yes, venerable, in attributes and graces, but not in years, his demise having occurred at *only* sixty-two! *eleven* years subsequent to our first personal introduction at his residence opposite the "Bowling Green," in propinquity to which then resided your "aristocracy," so called. Did one ever listen to lecturer so clear, so perspicuous, so persuasively eloquent? Out of the desk, however, and occasionally within its pale, his manner was cold and formal, never playful, though on one occasion, and one only, if my recollection serves me aright, while describing a somewhat peculiar case of fracture, he actually betrayed a smile upon his countenance before the class! Again;—the unrivaled "Hosack" of world-wide fame, a true pupil of Chiron;—Achilles of the "craft." Can those who enjoyed the inestimable privilege of his teachings ever fail to recall his broad shaggy brow, his majestic mien, and commanding presence in "classic toga clad"—the truly eloquent and scholarly manner in which his opinions were uttered and impressed, through the cogency of his massive, doric argumentation, upon the auditor? When that hand fell upon his reading desk, and at times the desk with it, under some burst of impassioned eloquence, woe betide the delinquent who had cast a mere shadow of doubt upon the soundness of the long cherished theories of the learned professor! It might be justly said of Hosack, "*nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.*" His social qualities also were pre-eminent; liberal to a fault.

Aye,—those were palmy days for the student, as the not unfrequent re-unions of the class at his cheerful fire-side, under the shadow of old St. Pauls, Vesey Street, most joyously testified. Shall I superadd that an occasional invitation to his private box at the "Old Park," (the only theatre then

extant,) is not entirely oblivious in the recollections of the speaker, even in these latter days.

That was the age, in theatricals, of the truly legitimate drama! not the wishy-washy, claptrap exhibitions of the present day, "*vox et preterea nihil*."

Of the venerable professors of theoretical surgery, "Mott," and clinical, (at the hospital,) "Stevens," (now both "Emeriti,") you will not expect me to speak. They still live! realizing the blessings of a green old age! Monuments of enduring professional fame, honor, and glory. Long may they survive, enjoying "*otium cum dignitate*," their richly earned inheritance! Each can with truthfulness declare, "*Exegi monumentum ære perennius*."!

What shall we say of him, the professor of "Natural History"? the "savan^Tpar excellence"—the perambulating cyclopedia of that day! the immortal Mitchill? As a perfect illustration of the man, his multifarious knowledge and acquirements, his tastes, pursuits, and illimitable associations, from "Solon" of United States Senate to inquisitor of entomological ovum, permit me to quote, *memoritur*, a *jeu d'esprit*, which appeared in one of the few daily papers of those days, and of which I have heard the subject, attempted to be lampooned, many times and oft' repeat snatches with exceeding gusto, at his own domicil, White street.

Previously, however, to a recital of the precious bijou, I would premise that, like all other noted personages, *grandes hommes*, our worthy professor was endowed with a peculiar susceptibility, (call it, if you please, weakness,) personal vanity; though, I grant ye, honestly acquired, and, in the jargon of the phrenologist he undoubtedly would have been rated "self-esteem" prodigious!—Hence he became the prominent target for many a dash of innocent raillery, through the *quasi* literary wags of the day, and many an antiquated Joe-Millerism was exhumed to puzzle the wits of the proverbially learned doctor!

We frequently called upon him, and were always most cordially welcomed, having, fortunately, at our first personal interview, presented him several rare mineralogical specimens from our native State; one especially, at that day, *unique*, which he candidly acknowledged he had never before had the good fortune to inspect, “Nephrite, or jade”; and in a subsequent correspondence is this characteristic description of the mineral: “tough, obdurate, irrefrangible; stone-hammer mutilated pending disintegration.” Owing to his versatility of talent;—morn, eve and noonday found his otherwise quiet mansion thronged with enquiring visitants from the boundless circuit of the globe; the common jack-tar with some exotic flora, fauna, fish, shell or algæ; the artisan with his model;—the merchant, philosopher, saint and sage;—each with some mooted question to be solved, or some grand principle to be eliminated in Physics, Politics, Polemics or Philosophy! Need it be added, that each and all were cordially received, and, *quoad hoc*, enlightened,—so bland and genial was his deportment, so illimitable his knowledge:

While a visitant, more than once, at his request, have we stood upon those “brickbats Babylonian” of which he was the sole possessor,—“that we might declare with truthfulness, to our children and children’s children, aye, to our latest posterity, in all coming time, that their honored predecessor had literally stood upon a portion of the veritable walls of Ancient Babylon!” Should any of them perchance be now present, they learn for the first time the astoundingly important (?) fact. But to the “doggerel,” premising, however, that those of my day who are conversant with the classic name adopted by our *Savant* for his country-seat,—the first steam frigate,—and, after our Revolution, the appellatives suggested for America and Americans,—also his proverbial passion for investigating, aye, if you please, *dabbling* in all sorts of incidents and objects, animate or inanimate, high or low, great or small, from fossiliferous Megatherium to microscopical Monad,

from monster Whale to tiny wheat-fly, in fine ;—his universal knowledge, will readily recognize and appreciate the allusions of the facetious rhymster.

Here is the promised *bijou*. Its caption ran thus : “ Why, Tom ! he knows *all* things, an’ it be not the devil himself, we may thank God.” (“ Old Play.”)

“ Sage of Plandome !” to give thy due,
 “ Fredonian,” “ Frede,” and “ Fredon ” too,
 Oh ! Mitchill, lord of granite flints,
 DOCTUS in Law, and wholesome dishes,
 Protector of the patent splints,
 The *foe* of Whales !—the *friend* of fishes !
 “ Tom Codos,” “ Septon,” “ Phlogobombos !”
What title shall we find to fit ye ?
 Inquisitor of sprats and compost !
 Or Surgeon-General of Militia ?

We hail thee Mammoth of the State !
 Steam-frigate, on the waves of Physic !
 Equal, in practice or debate,
 To cure the Nation of the Phthisic !
 The Amateur of “ Tartar dogs !”
 Wheat-flies, and maggots that create ’em !
 Of mummies !, and of mummy chogs !
 Of Brickbats, Lotteries, and pomatum !

It matters not how low or high it is,
 Thou knowest each hill and vale of knowledge ;
 Fellow of Forty-nine Societies ! !
 And Lecturer,—in Hosack’s College.
 And when thou diest ! (for life is brief !)
 Thy name, in all its gathered glory,
 Shall shine immortal ! as the leaf
 Of “ Delaplaine’s Repository.”

But, badinage aside. We have rarely listened to teacher more profoundly eloquent than Mitchill, when fully enraptured, as it were, with his favorite theme, Geology. His manner in the lecture-room was *unique*, perambulatory ; style, colloquial. Twenty minutes of the hour were invariably de-

voted to a familiar recital of the news and wonders of the day. So extended was his popular fame as "*Savan par excellence*," that no stranger of eminence in any specialty passed through the city, (smaller then, I grant ye, than now, obscuring nearly all ancient "Manhattan" with its architectural umbrageousness,) without a personal interview with the learned Doctor—the wonder of the day! Hence he became the genial receptacle, nay, embodiment, of varied fitting facts; in truth, of *universal* knowledge,—of which "the Class," in turn, at the morning hour, were the delighted recipients.

He was not unfrequently subpoenaed as *witness* at Court upon questions scientific.—Shall I cite an incident of a morning, illustrative of the peculiar genius, as an expert, of our professional "Ajax"? Of the notorious *Alexandre Whisteloe* case, involving a vital physiological question, and doubtless well recollected by many present, in which our worthy Professor appeared as an "expert" and principal witness, you will not expect from me a narration, under the present circumstances. But I cannot resist the temptation to rehearse to you the details of an incident with the "gentlemen of the round table," to the "hearing" of which the "class" were invited as participants.

The case stood, "State versus ——." The parties, living in your city, and highly respected then and now as merchants, were indicted under a special statute, for "vending *fish-oil* without legal inspection."

The defence set up was, that the oil so disposed of was *whale*, not *fish-oil*, therefore not subject to said inspection. The question mooted, then, intrinsically involved this point: Is a Whale a Fish? Here was a dilemma!—Lawyers disagreeing, who should be relied upon as an efficient "expert" in the premises? Who,—but our scientific professor of Natural History?

For the plaintiff "appeared" that giant of "the Bar," Sampson, the noted Irish barrister, cōexile and cotemporary

of your equally celebrated Emmett; and as both were “retained” in the case, expectations were on tiptoe, especially with the uninitiated. This was a joyous day for the Class, as my younger brethren will duly appreciate, the customary “quiz” and lecture being dispensed with, and they invited, *en masse*, to reserved seats at the court-room.

The case was duly opened by the learned Sampson, who had on previous occasions tested the shrewd and matchless tact of the witness. Both were evidently plumed for the sharp encounter of wit and repartee. After the usual formalities, the question was propounded: Doctor Mitchill, you are Professor of Natural History. Do they procure *oil* from the whale? if so, is it *fish-oil*?—or, in other words, is a whale a fish? A positively negative reply was elicited. Reasons for such unprecedented belief were called for. The witness remarked, they are Legion, “thick as Autumnal leaves in Vallombrosa,” and that his first evidence in confirmation of such belief was derived from a most reliable source,—none other than “Holy Writ,”—and cited *seriatim* from the first chapter of Genesis the Mosaic account of Creation,—therein showing conclusively to, at least, scriptural minds, that a distinct period of the fifth day was set apart, “when God created great whales,” in contradistinction “to every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly.” “Again, technically and scientifically speaking, after the manner of the ‘Natural Historian,’ we find the whale in *Class* mammalia; *Sub-Class* Gyren-cephala-mutilata; *Order*, Cætacea, *Family* or *Genus*, Balænidæ, (Vulgo) Whale!—hence, warm-blooded, respiring through lungs separated from abdomen by a diaphragm, and rightfully placed among the milk-secreting *animals*; also, supplying nourishment to its young, in like manner, by supporting them to the “fountain of life” with its lateral fins, or, if you please, *arms*, (the bony structure, though concealed, being similar to that of the human species,) *as did our mothers* their infantile *dependents*.”

The case was evidently becoming imminent before the enlightened (?) jury, as was noticed by the keen, observant eye of the counsel, who was himself somewhat nettled; the witness was thereupon interrupted *brusky* by the excited interlocutor, "Doctor! Did I understand you to testify that the whale had *arms* and *fingers* like ourselves, and holds the infant to the breast *thus* (suiting the action, &c) like *our* mothers?" "Aye, verily so." "Ah! Ah! then, Doctor, do they take snuff with the thumb and finger as we do?" (again illustrating the act by correspondent nasal and digital movement.)

This question drew forth a negative response from witness, with much merriment and marked applause from "reserved seats." "But," continued the Doctor, after narrating certain other anatomical and physiological resemblances between the whale and mammalia, which I here omit, "there is one other most extraordinary resemblance of the whale to our species, especially be he of the genus lawyer, both are so fond of blowing and spouting." And thus continued "the keen encounter of their wit" through the morning;—much to the *amusement* and edification of the class, and, if we recollect aright, through final judgement, discomfort to the plaintiff.

The last time we had the pleasure of a personal interview with our old Professor was only a few years before his late demise, passing down Broadway, like the ancient Roman, as was his wont, hatless, with his characteristic courtly air and majestic step. Our interview, on recognition, which was *proverbially instantaneous* on his part, was short but kindly. "Doctor, my old friend and pupil, I am overjoyed to meet you; I am just now from the cemetery, where I have in a state of erection a *tomb*, a place of final deposit for this *corpus* when it shall have "shuffled off its mortal coil," and in which I shall be most happy to reserve a niche for the repose of *that* of my worthy friend, your honored self." We need not hint the proffered privilege (?) was duly and thankfully *acknowledged*, but the *realization* thereof as thankfully deferred;—we yet rejoice-

ing "*in esse; et in sano corpore*," if "*mens sana*" be problematical.

We pass by our worthy Professor of Chemistry, the ever joyous and learned *Macnevin*, cœxile with Emmett and Sampson;—and that of Clinical Practice, the equally erudite, but demure *Hamersly*, whose traits of character have been so truthfully portrayed (*in loco*) through the graphic pages of our worthy predecessor.

But what of our then Professor of "Medical Jurisprudence and Obstetrics," the late, inimitable *Francis*? the bosom friend of Hosack; ever gay, ever eloquent as a public speaker or lecturer; as a friend, always genial and confiding; and, as the popular *Historian* of our Craft, deservedly pre-eminent. We revere and venerate the familiar adage, "*de mortuis nil, nisi bonum*," but really, cannot, in this connection, resist the narration (confidentially) of an amusing serio-comic, personal interview, so truly characteristic of the temperament of our old and well-tried friend. It happened on the occasion of the Anniversary of the "National Medical Association" at Baltimore.

The first day of the session had passed, and the late celebrated Chapman, of Philadelphia, elected President: a gentleman who, however unrivaled in his appropriate sphere, was found to have been wholly inefficient as a "presiding officer," as our first morning's deliberations—or rather want of deliberation—most sadly developed. Our worthy friend having originally officiated as *Chairman* at the *inception* of the association in this city, very justly considered—and a like view was cordially embraced by many of that body—that the distinguished honor rightfully devolved upon himself. "*Hinc ille lacrymæ*." He, exhibiting some annoyance at the unexpected result of our associate proceedings on the previous day; our interview the ensuing morning, intermingled with his proverbial *bonhomie*, ran thus: "My good friend, are you acquainted with the topography of this city and surroundings? Can you inform me where a man can go and *drown* himself, and have his body found?"—The latter contingency, I doubt not, prom-

inent in the mind of every victim to *actually* suicidal delusion ;—thus indicating the acute, practical observation of our friend.

Permit me, in this connection, to recount a few reminiscences of old “ Barclay Street College ” at the period of my matriculation (autumn of 1817) ; where, by the way, I arrived from my native residence, Rhode Island, by the regular packet communication, in the very limited (?) time of *nine* days, having encountered *in transitu* adverse winds ;—the same trip being now accomplished daily in less than seven hours by rail and ten or twelve by steamer.—I venerate her for the christian firmness and liberality of her earlier “ Faculty,” through whose prompt and kindly *dicta* her walls first welcomed here the advent of “ Unitarianism ” as expounded through the mild yet persuasive preaching of the elder Channing, and thus, in precious seed-time, superadding to the architectural embellishment of your city several classic temples, and to its intellectuality and social *status* a Dewey, a Channing, a Bel- lows and Osgood. I found the college and appliances in general—if we may except an important attaché, the porter—admirably adapted to the exigencies of the times. That distinguished functionary, however, prided himself more upon the circumstance of having been the private nurse (in his last moments) of the notorious infidel “ Tom Paine ” than for efficiency in his legitimate department ; and his finely-spun evening yarns were proverbial at the “ Lodge.” “ Old Bourbon and Rye ” (with their taproom concomitants, “ smasher, cobbler, cocktail and julep ”) were wholly unknown in those innocent (?) days, but unsophisticated “ Jamaica, Old Holland’s Cognac and Flip ” largely predominated ; fertile incitements to loquacity, indolence and ease. The inevitable consequence of his dereliction thereby incurred was that those of the anatomical class, who desired to investigate that fundamental branch of our course *practically* (and who did not under the seductive teachings of our efficient and truly persuasive Pro-

fessor), were absolutely obliged to have recourse to their own individual resources for a supply of the essential materiel. Under the special recognition, therefore, of the Faculty, a few more determined of the class, cordially volunteered, on the delinquency of our porter, upon that indispensable and highly responsible duty. And many an evening found us wending our weary way through Hudson street, thence along the byways bounded by post and rail country fence, passing *in transitu* the paternal homestead and *farm* of one of "our party,"* (now, we happily add, more pleasantly occupied as a Government official); thence, after a legitimate call at the Greenwich State Prison by circuitous routes, with scarcely a wayside cottage or even rushlight to cheer us onward, through a byroad, now "Waverly Place," to a certain "field" with a scriptural appellation, y'clept "the Potter's" rurally located at the period alluded to, and enclosed on the northern border with a rickety deal-board paling! now,—the elegant and fashionable "Washington Square"!

The faithful (?) keeper, happily for our party, suffered, apparently, periodically from constitutional "obliviousness," and particularly nyctalopia (night blindness) neither affection, however, even at the present day, unusual among officials; not so, however, at times, his favorite mastiff, who was occasionally on the *qui vive*; we, however, experienced no formidable interruption in our pursuits through the entire season.

After effecting our special object we emerged through Greenwich or Art lane by the "keeper's lodge," an antiquated country farm house, passing the venerable sycamore at the corner of that lane, and returned through the old Bloomingdale road, now Broadway! "The old mile-stone," recently uplifted by vandal hand, on the corner, where stands now St. Thomas' church, Houston street, legibly inscribed "*One Mile to New-York*," was ever greeted with joy as it indicated our near approach towards the city!--We thence crossed the "Stone

* Professor Torrey.

Bridge" over the "Collect," so called, a huge, open canal or trench, crossing from the East to the North river, surcharged with stagnant, foul water, and emitting foetid, noxious exhalations; it being the general receptacle of "all unclean things"! now commodious, busy Canal street;—and thence readily to the northern entrance of "old Barclay," at the Porter's Lodge on Park Place. Our anxieties and toils for that evening thus terminated.

New-York proper was then but a village, when contrasted with its present colossal proportions, its classic temples and palatial, marble residences. Houses were few and far between after crossing the "Old Collect," and mostly frame, with an occasional cosy country-seat of some more wealthy old burgher; and even the city below boasted of but few *elegant* private residences; and, for the traveller, only two hotels of any eminence—the new "Washington Hall," corner of Rheid street, where stands Stewart's marble block, and the "City Hotel," near old Trinity. While one theatre, the "Old Park," the famed Vauxhall Gardens, Scudder's Museum, rear of City Hall, and Grant Thorburn's aviary, seed and flower store, in the old Quaker meeting house, Liberty street, supplied the only resorts for the pleasure seeker. We can therefore literally declare, with Augustus at Rome, "*Urbem lateritiam inveni, marmoream reliqui.*"

But, we trespass too long upon your patience, my auditors, now; doubtless, quite exhausted by the recital of trite reminiscences of olden times; therefore "*revenons à nos moutons,*" and devote a few remarks to our brethren recently initiated into the "Arcana of the craft," craving therein their kindly indulgence. Youngfriends,—under maternal authority, we welcome you all most cordially to our fraternal fold, and also extend our congratulations that you are fairly embarked upon the expanded area of professional exploration and progress. When contrasted with those of our own day, we can truly say that we almost envy you the increased facilities now afforded,

through the daily developments of science, in furtherance, practically, of your adopted pursuits and praiseworthy labors. Be but *men*, and your path to honor, opulence and fame is absolute. Our territory is expanded, illimitable, "the harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers few."—At one of our ever agreeable interviews with the renowned "Velpéau," after his morning clinique, amongst other queries touching this country, its vast resources, etc., he enquired "how is it that so many of you Americans, of our calling, are enabled to travel, year after year, throughout all Europe, with your families, while we, ever industrious, are harnessed eternally to the professional jugum"? Our simple reply was, while the fraternity *here* are striving vigorously for *glory*, the red-ribbon-ornamentation of the button-hole and acquirements of "orders," wholly unknown in our country, we, with equal fidelity to professional duties, and social obligations, place our aspirations here, (suited the action) upon the *purse*, and its ample repletion. "Ah! oui! oui! mon cher Docteur, vraiment, vous avez raison, c'est la mode propre."

True, my friends, your first years will be passed, of necessity, similarly to those of your fathers, with dubious forebodings and anxieties; toiling by day and by night, in season and out of season, exhausting, as it were, "upon the desert air," your physical energies in nominally unrequited services, experiencing therein many a scene of mingled joy and sadness, but culminating, eventually, in the enduring acquirement of a largely increased self-confidence, and vast, practical, clinical experience, the auspicious harbingers of final, permanent success. Recollect, however, that you have but entered the *vestibule* of professional research; a vast expenditure of the midnight lamp is yet essential. It was facetiously said, of a brother of the craft, that we wot of, that he was ever over his Books, but, mind ye, they were his Day Book and Ledger. Incur not imputation so sordid.—An unfortunate idiot once, at my clinique, begged the gift of a memorandum book upon

the table. What use, we inquired, to be devoted? The reply was "I am a fisherman, to keep my daily accounts in"; "well,—how?" "Why, upon this side I will set down all the fish I catch"; and what upon the other? "why, all the fish that he did'nt catch." We apprehend that the earlier pages of our Day Books, under even comparatively favorable circumstances, may too generally compare with the balance sheet of our fisherman; those devoted to the patients that we "did'nt" catch will bear a striking resemblance to his record of uncaught fishes.

Tolerate us, for a moment only, on the besetting sin of these latter days, Quackery.—To *gentlemen* we need not say,—have no complicity with it, however specious and fascinating its superficial aspect. Homœopathy, in particular, its prominent congener:—what of that?—Arrant imposture!

Peruse in any of its acknowledged works, a single paragraph *only*, if you please, on "Provings." A passive *diarrhœa* of *words!* mere verbiage,—

"Only fit for skull
That's empty, when the moon is full!"

Those professing, never practice it; they shrewdly *invest* in the fascinations of its "infinitesimals" before a credulous public, and, to *secure success*, practice as we do.

Nay,—we go farther, (speaking advisedly too, for in these latter days with us, in table-turning, spirit-rapping New England, their name is legion,) that a man proclaiming himself of that order is either a fool or a knave, and he may take either horn of the dilemma; a fool,—if he sincerely and truly believes in such "infinitesimal" nonsense and absurdities; or, a knave if he professes thus and stealthily eschews thereof the practice. "*Damnum appellandum est, cum mala fama lucrum,*" Damning to the possessor is a fortune acquired at the sacrifice of honor. No, no, my bretheren, *Cave!* "*Via trita et honesta, Via tuta.*" In that path your calling and election is sure.

Recollect the encouraging words of Hippocrates to the

pupil, "that either for imaginary or real ills, *Plebs amat remedia*": or those of Byron,

"Physicians mend and cure us
Secundem Artem; but though we *sneer*
In health, when *sick* we call them to attend us
Without the least propensity to jeer."

Vale!

An apology is justly due to the ladies.—Though our natural diffidence was, at first, severely tested;—we are happy, thrice happy to greet on this occasion the *honored* presence of so goodly a number of our admirers of the gentler sex. Ever dear, ever lovely; what were man without them? Though it is feared their proverbially enduring patience has been sadly trifled with in lending a listening ear to the uninteresting and interminable medley which their unbounded courtesy has so graciously tolerated.

A passing word of sympathy to our brethren *more* advanced; with a few *original hints* upon the future endowment of our schools, and our tirade is at an end;—not desiring, by further procrastination, to convert this beautifully classic temple into a public dormitory.

Of late, much has been "said and sung" of the *change of type* of disease from "Sthenic to Asthenic." Without either affirming or denying that theory, we would modestly aver, that *personal* observation long since established, conclusively, one astounding fact—that in the absence of Epidemics, chronic affections exhibit a *marvelous* predisposition to become (?) *acute! judging*, however, merely from our daily persistency of professional efforts, at such seasons, for their dislodgement. We would not affirm that the law is universal; but many of those of the silvery lock, confessing the "soft impeachment" may have recognized, like ourself, the anomaly (?) in their *own* practice, if not in that of their brethren.

Again,—our age has experienced a marked revolution in "*Treatment*." We are now, in the language of the engineer,

evidently on the descending grade from the *heroic* of "Rush" to the "*Expectant*" of the French school, and, without an absolute pro or con in the premises, though largely inclined practically to the latter system, verging towards "rationalism;" we must say that those adopting it exclusively, *in extremis*, ever expecting, rarely realising, especially in acute affections, (excepting always those "self-limiting") very much remind us of an old patient from the country, a proverbially-life-long speculator and "*expectant*" in lottery tickets. We once inquired,—have you drawn any prizes of late? "No, never, 'nary,' but *now*," his countenance lighting up with exceeding joy, "I am right hopeful"! "aye indeed! how so?" "Why you see, I have bought through life a great many tickets, and always, somehow, *thought* I should draw something, and never did!" but *now* he had bought one and "didn't expect to draw anything, and that made him think he should."——

But what of *schools* and their *endowment*? When your humble servant, the speaker, was graduated, our school had only six professors, proper, yet with our apparently feeble (?) appliances we ostensibly learned so much that, with the uninitiated,

"The constant wonder grew,
That one small head could carry all each knew!"

while now forsooth, to secure the same astounding (?) developments, we learn (through "prospectus,") that at corresponding institutions, not a thousand miles removed from our present locality, eighteen are held in requisition!! Therefore in this "fast age" of "steamer," "rail," and "telegraph," to secure commensurate *popularity* "and make assurance doubly sure," would it be considered *indecorous* in us to suggest, which we do with becoming modesty and diffidence, that one other should be superadded to their professorships! thus rendering the "Faculty" absolutely complete? to wit: a professor, not of "Sèmèiology à la Double,"

the French author, but of "Signs."—And, as the innovation is somewhat *novel*, permit us to give an illustration of its merits and intrinsic (?) worth.—Besides, if adopted, its *lofty aspirations* would, doubtless, largely enhance the popularity of any institution, or, in our case, at least the *parent* of which this is a "department!"

A learned Spanish scholar and profound pundit a few years since visited "Oxford University," and, amongst other suggestions, said that every university ought to have a professor of "Signs."—Some at that place with a view to their amusement, or not willing to acknowledge any deficiency in that celebrated school or institution, told him there was such a professorship, filled with a profound scholar and philosopher of great theological attainments, who was then unfortunately absent.—So desirous was the visitor to see him, that he said he would await his return although it would procrastinate his own journey. The authors of the pleasantry had gone too far to retrace their steps, and found it necessary to procure a professor, *pro hac vice*. A butcher, strong, athletic, and ignorant, was procured to go into the lecture room and take the professor's chair! and was instructed when the stranger should come in, to attend to his signs, preserve perfect silence, and to answer the stranger's signs by signs only. Unfortunately the sham professor had but *one eye*, but when dressed in the professor's garb made a fair appearance.

The erudite stranger was admitted; and stopping before the professor's chair, lifted up one finger; was answered by the professor with two fingers. The stranger then lifted up three fingers; in answer, the professor then doubled up his fist.—The stranger displayed an orange, at which the professor took from his pocket a crust of oat-meal bread; and here the trial ended.—Admirable! said the stranger, when he left the professor and the lecture-room. "How readily we comprehend each other's ideas by signs! I held up one finger to express there is one God, he immediately held up two fingers to ex-

press Father and Son as equal ; I held up my three fingers to signify the adorable Trinity composing the God-head, at which he doubled up his fist, and assumed a stern and severe look to express that by such an union were strength and power ; I then took an orange, and held it up, to show that from that all-powerful Being we derived the luxuries of life.—In answer to which, he pulled from his pocket a crust of oat-meal bread, to shew that to the same power we were indebted for the necessaries, indicated by bread, the staff of life.”——

The listeners to the stranger’s explanation of the mute conversation they had witnessed, then called on the mock-professor of signs to get an elucidation from him. Why, said he, when that fellow came into the room, he held up *one* finger, as much as to say, So you’ve got but *one eye*. To shew him that I thought my *one* eye was as good as his *two*, I held up two fingers ; *he* then held up *three* fingers, to show that he and I together had three eyes. I then began to grow wrathful, looked mad and doubled up my fist, and should have struck him, if you had not been present. He then, to provoke me farther, held up an orange, the fruit of his country, and such as ours don’t produce. I then took out a crust of oat-meal bread, to let him know that I valued that more than all the oranges his country could raise, and, by ——, if he’d offered me another insult, I should have leveled him.”——“*Hic finis fandi.*”

Trusting that my suggestions may be duly considered ;—and, with many kindly thanks to all, for the unbounded courtesy and condescension with which I have been greeted pending the rehearsal of my feeble efforts, permit me to subjoin a hearty farewell.

